D/Agriculture

Northern Rhodesia

Department of Lands

ANNUAL REPORT
for the Year
1957

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Department of Lands

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1957

PART I.—INTRODUCTION

In accordance with a motion passed by the Legislative Council on 18th March, 1957, the Department of Surveys and Land ceased to exist at the conclusion of business on 31st March, 1957, and as from 1st April, 1957, it was superseded by two new departments now known respectively as the Survey Department and the Lands Department. The Survey Department was placed under the control of a Surveyor-General while the Lands Department, which included a town planning section and a joint accounting unit, came under the control of the Commissioner of Lands. The Lands and Deeds Registry remains attached to the Lands Department.

2. Departmental headquarters for both departments were still located in the temporary prefabricated buildings at Lusaka acquired by the Government from the Rhodesian Selection Trust Limited, but during the course of the year the Survey Department moved into new premises which have been conveniently built on an adjoining piece of land to the north of the existing buildings.

3. The creation of the new Department of Lands provided the opportunity for complete reorganisation which resulted in a slight increase in establishment. Authority was given for two new appointments to be included in the Estimates: a Deputy Commissioner of Lands and a Chief Lands Officer. A substantive appointment of a Deputy Commissioner of Lands has not yet been made while, owing to the present financial stringency, the post of Chief Lands Officer was not filled during the year, and at the time of preparing this report it still remains vacant.

4. The post of Senior Lands Officer (Supernumerary) became vacant on 19th August, 1957, and remained so until 28th October, 1957.

5. The arrangement between the Federal Government and the governments of Northern and Southern Rhodesia for town planning services in the Territory still obtained throughout the year 1957. The Town Planning Department of Southern Rhodesia continued to provide the staff on a secondment basis to Northern Rhodesia and was reimbursed by the Federal Government for the costs of these services; the Northern Rhodesia Government also recovered the costs from the Federal Government for all internal ancillary town planning services incurred up to and including 31st December, 1957. It is proposed that all town planning services in the Territory should come under the direct control of the Commissioner of Lands during 1958, and the cost of providing personnel and territorial town planning requirements will be met by the Northern Rhodesia Government.

6. On 14th March, 1957, the Agricultural Lands Ordinance, No. 51 of 1956, was promulgated and on the same date the Agricultural Lands Board was appointed. This board is charged with the encouragement and stabilisation of land settlement and the control of the alienation of agricultural Crown land within the Territory.

7. The Department of Lands is represented by the Commissioner of Lands on the Agricultural Lands Board, the Water Board and the Territorial Town Planning Board, of which he is the chairman. The Commissioner of Lands is also an Estate Duty Commissioner.

PART II.—ADMINISTRATION

Lands—Urban Areas

8. The demand for new Crown land sites of all kinds in townships has been maintained at the same rate as in 1956. One thousand and eighty-two leases of such sites, of which 627 were head leases to local authorities, were issued during the year. The head lease system, which was first introduced on a restricted basis in 1955 and which was subsequently extended in 1956, has operated satisfactorily throughout the year and local authorities have undoubtedly benefited financially. There has inevitably been a drop in Government's land sales revenue in consequence of the introduction of this system, the amount being approximately £25,000.

9. During the year a committee was appointed with the following terms of reference:

> "To examine the present policy and system of land tenure in urban and peri-urban areas and, having particular regard to the need for encouraging capital investment and other development, to make recommendations on the necessity for, or desirability of, effecting revisions or changes."

The committee's findings and recommendations were released for public information in November, 1957, but are still under consideration by Government. The main feature of the report is a recommendation that Government adopt a policy of freehold tenure in urban areas,

excepting therefrom African townships and African housing areas in municipalities and public townships, for the present time.

LANDS—AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS

10. Twenty-one agricultural smallholdings and eighteen new agricultural units, of a total area of 35,610 acres, were alienated during the year. In addition, forty-nine preliminary agricultural leases were replaced by longer term tenancies.

11. The Agricultural Lands Board has implemented an assisted land settlement scheme in the Mazabuka area where four developed farms have been alienated. Further schemes will shortly be inaugurated in the Mkushi Block, where it is intended as a first phase of the scheme to make thirty-seven farms available for alienation, and near Mufulira where eighteen new farms are envisaged. The Agricultural Lands Board will arrange to clear forty acres of land and sink a borehole on each farm and the main feeder roads will also be constructed before the land is offered for alienation. Investigations are being carried out in the Eastern and Northern Provinces to ascertain whether further assisted settlement schemes could be inaugurated in those regions.

12. The suspension of the alienation of Crown land for agricultural purposes on the Copperbelt continued throughout 1957, but as the investigations being undertaken by the Federal Department of Conservation and Extension are nearing completion it is hoped that certain areas will be released for development early in the New Year.

LANDS—RESIDENTIAL LOTS

13. Most of these groups of lots are situated on the Copperbelt and the demand for this type of holding continued; ninety-one residential lots were alienated under leasehold during the year. Two new blocks of residential lots known as " South Downs ", in the Kitwe District, and " North Riding ", in the Broken Hill District, were advertised for alienation during the year. Thirty-one lots were offered in the " South Downs " block of which seventeen have been taken up and ten lots were offered in the " North Riding " block of which only two had been taken up by the end of the year.

LANDS—ALIENATION OF LAND

14. During the year, for administration purposes, the designation of land was changed to the following classifications:

(*a*) " Farms "—all tracts of land allocated for agricultural purposes.
(*b*) " Stands "—all parcels of land in municipalities and public or proclaimed townships.
(*c*) " Lots "—all other parcels of land which do not fall within either category (*a*) or (*b*) above.

15. The total number of deeds (other than surrenders) issued by the department during the year was 1,333. This figure is made up of 1,082 stands in townships, eighty-eight agricultural units, of which forty-nine were replacements, ninety-one residential lots and seventy-two miscellaneous leases, e.g. mining, African housing and other purposes. The area of land held on lease from the Crown increased by 37,399 acres. A detailed breakdown of various types of alienation is set out in Table No. 8.

LANDS—SUMMARY

16. The areas of various classes of land in the Territory at the end of 1957 were approximately as follows:

	Acres
(*a*) Native Reserves	34,713,000
Barotseland	29,427,000
(*b*) Native Trust Land	109,536,000
Total ...	173,676,000
Alienated and Reserved Crown Land:	
Freehold	3,508,000
Leasehold	2,077,000
Township Reserves	195,100
(*c*) Unalienated Crown land outside townships	4,633,500
Total ...	10,413,600

NOTE:	*Acres*	*Variations from 1956 figures* *Acres*
(*a*) Includes Protected Forest Areas totalling	966,720	
(*b*) Includes Forest Reserves and Protected Forest Areas in Native Trust Land totalling	5,656,080	(+894,770)
(*c*) Includes Forest Reserves and Protected Forest Areas totalling	1,429,156	(+98,981)
Total area—Forest Reserves and Protected Forest Areas	8,051,956	

PART III.—LANDS AND DEEDS REGISTRY

17. The volume of work handled by the Lands and Deeds Registry is a positive indication of the expansion in development of the Territory. Once again there has been a further substantial increase in the number of documents registered during the year, the total number of registrations being 8,735 compared with 8,183 during the previous year.

18. This may be accounted for in part by the new head lease system, whereby stands are alienated on lease to local authorities for a term of ninety-nine years and which are then subleased by the local authority to individuals for the unexpired residue of the term, thus involving an additional registration in each case. Despite this increase in the number of registrations, it has been found possible substantially to reduce the time required for registration and delays which formerly existed have now been reduced to a minimum. The services of an additional registry clerk were obtained during the year, and in view of this and of the fact that the number of registers and files continues to increase, it is extremely desirable that the Deeds Registry should be accommodated in larger premises as soon as further space becomes available. For security reasons it is imperative that consideration be given to the provision of appropriate accommodation for the Registry.

19. It is hoped that a draft of the new Lands and Deeds Registry Ordinance will be forthcoming during 1958, in which there are proposals to incorporate provisions for the improvement of the present system of registration and also to provide for an increase in the present rate of the fees and duties, which have remained unchanged since 1904.

20. The mining titles section of the Registry is to be transferred to Kitwe on 1st January, 1958, where it will operate under the administration of the Mines Department.

21. Details of registrations in 1957 are given in Tables Nos. 4, 5, 6 and 7.

PART IV.—TOWN PLANNING

22. The year has been an active and successful one despite chronic staff shortages. Emphasis has been laid upon the necessity of providing statutory planning control in respect of all major towns. As a result statutory zoning schemes have been approved and are now in operation for Broken Hill, Livingstone, Kitwe, Luanshya, Mufulira, Choma, Fort Jameson, Kafue, Kalomo, Mazabuka, Monze, Abercorn, Bancroft and Kasama. During 1958 it is the intention to convert the zoning schemes in respect of the larger centres into town planning schemes.

23. Apart from preparation of schemes, the Town Planning Service has continued to provide advice and assistance to Government departments, the Town Planning Board and all local authorities in the preparation of detail layouts and other plans and maps, in respect of development throughout the Territory.

24. During the year the Town Planning Board submitted a draft Town and Country Planning Bill to Government for consideration.

PART V.—REVENUE

25. The total revenue collected by the department amounted to £166,141. Of this sum the Lands and Deeds Registry accounted for £69,233, which is an increase of £22,872 over the revenue which accrued during 1956. This increase partially offsets the reduction of £25,000 in land sales revenue mentioned earlier in the report. The British South Africa Company is no longer entitled to a half share of land revenue, but now receives instead an agreed fixed annual sum of £50,000. This fixed sum is payable on or after 31st March in each year and will finally cease with the payment to be made on 31st March, 1965.

26. Table No. 2 analyses the revenue and affords a comparison with recent years, whilst Table No. 3 shows the increase in the number of current leases and in the annual rent roll. Although the amount of £2,762 for rent outstanding at 31st December, 1957, shows an increase over the previous year, it is still considered satisfactory when compared with an annual rent roll of £61,551. The bulk of the rents outstanding is in respect of agricultural land, the lessees of which have sustained severe seasonal losses and are finding difficulty in meeting their commitments. However, strenuous efforts are being made to reduce the amount outstanding.

CONCLUSION

27. It is considered that, despite the handicap of a shortage of senior and experienced staff for the greater part of the year, the Department of Lands has had a satisfactory first year. The work in all sections has been brought up to date and it is confidently expected that this happy state of affairs will continue during 1958.

28. In conclusion I wish to express my gratitude for the loyal support of my staff during the very difficult period of formulation and reorganisation.

W. M. YOUNGER,
Commissioner of Lands.

LUSAKA,
28th March, 1958.

TABLE No. 1

Staff

1. Mr. W. M. Younger, M.B.E., was appointed Commissioner of Lands on 1st April, 1957.
2. Mr. D. J. B. Copeland acted as Deputy Commissioner of Lands from 1st April, 1957, to 7th December, 1957.
3. Mr. J. F. Davidson was appointed Senior Lands Officer (Supernumerary) on 28th October, 1957.
4. The staff of the department at 31st December, 1957, was as follows:

Commissioner	Mr. W. M. Younger, M.B.E.
Deputy Commissioner	Vacant.
Chief Lands Officer	Vacant.
Senior Lands Officer (Supernumerary)	Mr. J. F. Davidson.
Lands Officers (8)	Messrs. D. O. E. Baldrey, K. J. W. Seale, T. Miller, D. I. McDougall, A. B. C. Fergie, J. G. Pete, J. v. R. Conradie, J. L. Day (Acting).
Lands Officer (Supernumerary)	Mr. R. E. L. Hewitt (Acting).
Draughtsman	Vacant.
Registrar of Lands and Deeds	Mr. C. O'Connor.
Assistant Registrar of Lands and Deeds (2)	Mr. H. G. Martin. (1 post vacant.)
Senior Accountant	Mr. I. T. Killick (Acting).
Land Rangers (2)	Vacant.
Land Settlement Officers (6)	All seconded to Agricultural Lands Board.
Secretary	Mr. T. M. J. Nortier (Acting).
Secretary, Town Planning Board	Mr. J. Ker.
Photoprinting Operator	Vacant.
Assistant Statfile Operator (Female)	Vacant.
Tracer (Female)	Mrs. C. B. Williams.
Township Lands Inspectors (2)	Mr. B. R. D. Eccles, Mr. P. S. Gould.
Clerks (Male) (5)	4 posts filled. (1 post vacant.)
Clerks (Female) (27)	25 posts filled. (2 posts vacant.)

TABLE No. 2

Comparative Table of Revenue Collected

Source of Revenue	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
	£	£	£	£	£
Sale of maps	432	352	437	606	—*
Survey fees	10,195	12,044	19,735	20,130	—*
Rent of land and buildings	33,737	35,745	41,438	45,945	61,748
Quit rent	155	439	147	140	139
Miscellaneous	6,312	20,314	7,474	4,768	3,659†
Land sales	46,605	67,593	69,365	53,702	31,362
Total revenue collected	97,436	136,487	138,596	125,291	96,908
Lands and Deeds Registry					
Total of Lands and Mines Registry revenue	28,931	30,906	51,988	46,351	69,233

* Included in Department of Surveys Annual Report.
† Includes: Mining revenue ... £416
Road charges ... £2,421

Also collected during 1957: Service charges, Bancroft and Kalulushi Township stands—£17,346.

TABLE No. 3

Comparative Table of Leases in force

	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
Leases in force, 31st December	4,580	5,419	6,285	7,349	8,445
Annual rent payable	£35,344	£42,286	£49,653	£55,927	£61,551
Rent outstanding, 31st December	£897	£1,215	£1,121	£1,554	£2,762

TABLE No. 4

Deeds Registered, 1957

Nature of Deed	*Number registered* 1957
Surrenders and Certificates of Re-entry	202
Crown Grants	3
Crown Leases	1,359
Mortgages	1,206
Discharge of Mortgages	343
Private Leases	420
Private Conveyances	586
Letters of Administration	15
Grants of Probate	36
Assignments	384
Transfers of Mortgage	1
Quit Rent Redemptions and Apportionments ...	3
Ante Nuptial Contracts	1
Bills of Sale	4
Powers of Attorney	76
Deeds of Arrangement	—
Miscellaneous	642
Provisional Certificates	860
Certificates of Title	2,014
Total	8,155

Mortgages amounting to £5,792,887 6*s*. 7*d*.
Bills of Sale amounting to £4,741 16*s*. 4*d*.

Certificates of Official Search	54

TABLE No. 5

Mining Titles

Nature of Deed	*Number registered* 1957
Locations Registered	358
Locations Forfeited	38
Locations Abandoned	7
Special Grants Registered	25
Special Grants Forfeited	—
Miscellaneous	98
Total	526

TABLE No. 6

Water Registry

Water Grants Registered	54

TABLE No. 7

Comparative Table of Total Deeds Registered in Recent Years

Year	*Totals*
1953 ...	3,792
1954 ...	5,221
1955 ...	6,861
1956 ...	8,183
1957 ...	8,735

TABLE No. 8

Alienation of Land

(*a*) *Leases issued:*

Head leases of stands to Municipalities	627
Direct leases from the Crown:	
Township stands—Residential	364
Township stands—Trading	47
Township stands—Industrial	31
Township stands—Church sites	13
Residential lots	91
Agricultural—Farms (new)	39*
Agricultural—Farms (replacements)	49
Others:	
African housing lots	10
Mining and miscellaneous lots	62
Total leases issued	1,333

(*b*) *Leases terminated:*

Terminations	60
Surrenders	159
Re-entries	7
Expirations (not replaced)	11
Total leases terminated	237

* Total area, 35,611 acres.